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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/293,231	04/16/1999	STEPHEN M. BRUNELL	D-10	4595

7590 12/04/2001

ARTHRO CARE CORPORATION
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EXAMINER

MENDEZ, MANUEL A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3763

DATE MAILED: 12/04/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/293,231

Applicant(s)

BRUNELL ET AL.

Examiner

Manuel Mendez

Art Unit

3763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE ____ MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 September 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 39 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 24-27, 31 and 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 28-30 and 33-38 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 3763

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Claim 39 is withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 8.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 27 recites the limitation "'electrically insulating support member'" in line 2 of said claim. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 24, 25, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Langberg**. The referenced patent discloses an electrosurgical instrument having a shaft with proximal and distal ends and an electrode assembly at the distal end of the shaft, the electrode assembly comprising an active electrode spaced from a return electrode, and a power supply coupled to the electrode assembly for applying a sufficient high frequency voltage difference between the active and return electrodes. Claim 24 does not disclose a specific set of frequency ranges. Accordingly, it appears

Art Unit: 3763

that the power supply in Langberg is capable of generating radio frequencies within the ranges disclosed by the applicant on page 21 of the specification. Therefore, the Lamberg patent is found to anticipate the claims listed above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 26, 31, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Lamberg** in view of **Bales et al.** Lamberg does not disclose the use of insulating materials such as ceramic, glass, and silicone. However, the use of the listed materials for insulating purposes is conventional as evidenced by Bales et al. The teachings of Bales et al. provide the motivation to conclude that ceramic, glass and silicone are used as insulating support in electrosurgical equipment. Based on the evidenced above, a person of ordinary skill in the art would consider the use of ceramic, glass and silicone, an obvious design choice.

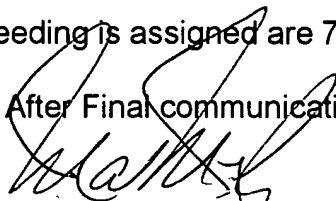
Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 28-30 and 33-38 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Art Unit: 3763

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Manuel Mendez whose telephone number is 703-308-2221. The examiner can normally be reached on 0730-1800 hrs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Seidel can be reached on 703-308-5115. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3590 for regular communications and 703-305-3590 for After Final communications.



Manuel Mendez
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3763

November 29, 2001